

The Land of Broken Promises

A Stirring Story
of the Mexican
Revolution

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"The Fighting Fool"
"Hidden Waters"
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CHAPTER XXIII—Continued.

"Now she strikes it!" he announced, as the rumble turned into a roar; but the roar grew louder, there was a crash as the trucks struck a curve, and then a great metal ore-car swung round the point, rode up high as it hit the reverse and, speeding by as if shot from a catapult, swept through the yard, smashed into a freight car, and leaped, car and all, into the creek.

"They've sneaked my derriller!" said the roadmaster, starting on a run for the shops. "Who'll go with me to put in another one? Or we'll loosen a rail on the curve—that'll call for no more than a clawbar and a wrench!"

"Till go!" volunteered Bud and the man who stood guard, and as startled sleepers roused up on every side and ran toward the scene of the wreck they dashed down the hill together and threw a handcar on the track.

Then, with what tools they could get together, and a spare derriller on the front, they pumped madly up the canyon, holding their breaths at every curve for fear of what they might see. If there was one runaway car there was another, for the rebels were beginning an attack.

Already on the ridges above them they could hear the crack of rifles, and a jet or two of dust made it evident that they were the mark. But with three strong men at the handles they made the handcar jump. The low hills fled behind them. They rounded a point and the open track lay before them, with something—

"Jump!" shouted the roadmaster, and as they tumbled down the bank they heard a crash behind them and their handcar was knocked into kindling wood.

It was a close call for all three men, and there had been but an instant between them and death, a death by the most approved fighting methods of the revolutionists, methods which kept the fighters out of harm's way.

"Now up to the track!" the roadmaster panted, as the destroyer swept on down the line. "Find some tools—we'll take out a rail!"

With frantic eagerness he toiled up the hill and attacked a fish-pole, and Bud and the young guard searched the hillside for tools to help with the work. They fell to with sledge and clawbar, tapping off nuts, jerking out spikes, and heaving to loosen the rail—and then once more that swift-moving something loomed up suddenly on the track.

"Up the hill!" commanded the roadmaster, and as they scrambled into a gulch a wild locomotive, belching smoke and steam like a fire engine, went rushing past them, struck the loose rail, and leaped into the creek bed. A moment later, as it crashed its way down to the water, there was an explosion that shook the hills. They



Every Sign of War But the Dead.

crouched behind the cut bank, and the trees above them bowed suddenly to the slash of an iron ball.

"Dynamite!" cried the roadmaster, grinning triumphantly as he looked up after the shock, and when the fall of fragments had ceased, and they had fled as if by instinct from the place, they struck hands on their narrow escape. But back at the big house, with everybody giving thanks for their delivery from the powder train, the master mechanic raised a single voice of protest. He knew the sound. He knew that dynamite had not been responsible for the crash that smote the ears of the anxious listeners.

"Was not dynamite!" he yelled. "Powder train be damned! It was No. 9! She was sour as a distillery! She blew up, I tell ye—she blew up when she hit the creek!"

And even after a shower of bullets from the ridge had driven them all to cover he still rushed to those who

would listen and clamored that it was the train.

But there was scant time to hold a post-mortem on No. 9, for on the summit of a near-by ridge, and overlooking the black tank, the rebels had thrown up a wall in the night, and from the security of this shelter they were industriously shooting up the town.

The smash of the first wild car had been their signal for attack, and as the explosion threw the defenders into confusion they made a rush to take the tank. Here, as on the day before, was stationed the federal garrison, a scant twenty or thirty men in charge of a boy lieutenant.

Being practically out of ammunition he did not stand on the order of his going, but as his pelones pelted past the superintendent's house the reorganized miners, their belts stuffed with cartridges from their own private stock, came charging up from the town and rallied them in the rear.

Trained by American leaders they were the only real fighting force to be depended upon unless the Americans themselves should take a hand in the game, and that they could not do without the possibility of serious international consequences, a chance they could not take except as a last resort to save the women and children and themselves.

In a solid, shouting mass they swept up the hill together, dropped down behind the defenses, and checked the astounded rebels with a volley. Then there was another long-range battle, with every sign of war but the dead, until at last, as the firing slackened from the lack of cartridges, a white flag showed on the ridge above, and the leaders went out for a parley—one of those parleys so characteristic of Mexican revolutions, and which in reality mean so little, for both sides know that the words uttered are meaningless, and should one of them ever result in a surrender the terms of that surrender would not be regarded, once the victims were in the hands of the victors.

Properly speaking, Del Rey was in command of the town, but neither the federalists nor the miners would recognize his authority and the leadership went by default. While they waited to hear the rebel demands the Americans took advantage of the truce to bring up hot food from the hotel, where Don Juan de Dios stood heroically at his post. Let bullets come and go, Don Juan kept his cooks about him, and to those who had doubted his valor his coffee was answer enough.

"W'y, my gracious, Mr. Hooker," he rallied, as Bud refreshed himself between trips, "ain't you going to take any up to those women? Don't drink so much coffee now, but give it to the men who fight!"

"Um-pum," grunted Bud with a grin, "they got a skiff of mescal already! What they need is another carload of ammunition to help 'em shoot their first rebel!"

"I thought you said they wouldn't fight!" twitted Don Juan. "This is the battle of Fortuna that I was telling you about last week."

"Sure," answered Bud, "and over there is the dead!"

He pointed to a riot of mescal bottles that marked the scene of the night's potations, and Don Juan gave him up as hopeless.

"A pile of bottles usually represent the casualty list in a Mexican fight," added Bud as Don Juan moved away. But, just as he would, Bud saw that the situation was serious, for the fool-hardy Sonorans had already emptied their cartridge-belts, and their guns were no better than clubs. Unless the rebels had been equally reckless with their ammunition they had the town at their mercy, and the first thing that they would demand would be the refugees in the big house.

Before that could be permitted the Americans would probably take a hand in the fight, for, while the great majority of the women in the house were Mexican, there were a few Americans, and they would be protected regardless of international complications. But Gracia Aragon was not an American, and she could not claim the protection of these countrymen of his.

The possession of the town; the arms of the defenders; food, clothing and horses to ride—none of these would satisfy them. They would demand the rich Spanish landowners to be held for ransom, the women first of all. And of all those women huddled up in the casa grande not one would bring a bigger ransom than Gracia Aragon.

Bud pondered upon the outcome as the emissaries wrangled on the hillside, and then he went back to the corral to make sure that his horse was safe. Copper Bottom, too, might be held for ransom. But, knowing the rebels as he did, Hooker foresaw a different fate, and rather than see him become the mount of some rebel chieftain he had determined, if the town surrendered, to make a dash.

Riding by night and hiding in the hills by day he could get to the border in two days. All he needed was a little jerked beef for the trip and he would be ready for anything.

So he hurried down to the hotel again and was just making a sack of food fast to his saddle when he heard a noise behind him and turned to face Aragon. For two days the once-haughty Don Cipriano had slunk about like a sick cat, but now he was headed for Gracia's big room, and the look in his eyes betrayed his purpose.

"Where you going?" demanded Hooker in English, and at the gruff challenge the Spaniard stopped in his tracks. The old, hunted look came back into his eyes, he seemed to shrink before the stern gaze of the Texan, and, as the memory of his past misdeeds came over him, he turned as if to flee.

But there was a smile, an amused and tolerant smirk, about the American's mouth, and even for that look of understanding the harried hacendado seemed to thank him. He was broken now, thrown down from his pedestal of arrogance and conceit, and as Hooker did not offer to shoot him at sight he turned back to him like a lost dog that seeks but a kind word.

Bud knew that Aragon was entirely at his mercy, that fear had clutched the once arrogant Spaniard by the throat, and it was almost worth the anxiety he felt for this man's daughter to see the father cowed. Aragon



"I'm Going to Get Those Papers!"

crawled closer to Bud as if for the protection he could not get from his own people.

"Ah, señor!" he whined, "your pardon! What?" as he sighted the sack of meat—"you are going, too? Ah, my friend!" his eyes lighted up suddenly at the thought—"let me ride with you! I will pay you—yes, anything—but if Bernardo Bravo take me he will hang me! He has sworn it!"

"Well, you got it coming to you!" answered Hooker heartlessly. "But I will pay you well!" pleaded Aragon. "I will pay you—!" He paused as if to consider what would tempt him and then suddenly he raised his head.

"What is it you wish above everything?" he questioned eagerly. "Your title to the mine—no! Bien! Take me to the line—protect me from my enemies—and the papers are yours!"

"Have you got them with you?" inquired Hooker with businesslike directness. "No, but I can get them!" cried Aragon, forgetful of everything but his desire to escape. "I can get them while you saddle my horse!"

"Where?" demanded Hooker craftily. "From the agente mineral!" answered Aragon. "I have a great deal of influence with him, and—"

"Bastante!" exploded Bud in a voice which made Aragon jump. "Enough! If you can get them, I can! And we shall see, Señor Aragon, whether this pistol of mine will not give me some influence, too!"

"Then you will take them?" faltered Aragon as Hooker started to go. "You will take them and leave me for Bernardo Bravo to—"

"Listen, señor!" exclaimed Hooker, halting and advancing a threatening forefinger. "A man who can hire four men to do his dirty work needs no protection from me. You understand that—no? Then listen again. I am going to get those papers. If I hear a word from you I will send you to join your four men."

He touched his gun as he spoke and strode out into the open, where he beckoned the mineral agent from the crowd. A word in his ear and they went down the hill together, while Don Cipriano watched from above. Then, as they turned into the office, Aragon spat out a curse and went to seek Manuel del Rey.

CHAPTER XXIV.

In a land of class privilege and official graft it is often only in times of anarchy that a poor man can get his rights. For eight months Hooker had battled against the petty intrigue of Aragon and the agente mineral, and then suddenly, when the times turned to war and fear gripped at their hearts, he rose up and claimed his own, holding out his brawny right hand and demanding the concession of his mine.

In a day the whirligig of fortune had turned, and it was the fighting man who dominated. He spoke quietly and made no threats, but the look in his eye was enough, and the agente gave him his papers. Then he wrote out a receipt for the mining tax and Bud stopped forth like a king.

With his papers inside his shirt and a belt of gold around his waist there was nothing left in Mexico for him. Once on his horse and headed for the line and he could laugh at them all. In Gadsden he could show title to Kruger, he could give answer for his trust and look the world in the eye.

It had been a long and strenuous fight; a fight made against seemingly insurmountable odds; a fight that had cost him much, but he had won. He had proved the trust Kruger had placed in him, and it had been a fight worth winning.

Yes, he was a man now—but his work was not quite done. Up at the big house, with the screaming women around her, was Gracia Aragon, and he owed her something for his rough words. To pay her for that he would stay. Whatever she asked now he would grant it; and if worst came to worst he would take her with him and make good his promise to Phil. He had given his word and that was enough. Now he had only to wait.

It would not be long, for the parley would soon be over, and if the cowardly rurales surrendered the town to the bandits he would make a break for the line and civilization with the girl. It would be a hard ride, and alone he would have no fear of the results, but he would chance it even with the girl rather than leave her.

The boy lieutenant, the brothers Mendoza, the superintendent, and Manuel del Rey, all were out on the hillside talking terms with Bernardo Bravo and his chiefs. With the rebels it was largely a bluff, since field-glasses had shown them to be short of cartridges, but they had over a thousand men massed along the ridges and, with courage, could easily take the town.

Bud knew that courage was the one thing lacking. It was the one thing that was always lacking in these Mexican fights. The Mexican bandits takes but little chance when he goes to war.

As for the Mendozas and their Sonoran miners, they were properly chagrined at their waste of ammunition and swore by Santa Guadalupe to fight it out with hand grenades. Even as their leaders wrangled the Mexican powder men were busily manufacturing bombs, and all the while the superintendent was glancing to the south, for swift couriers had been sent to Alvarez, the doughty Spanish hacendado of the hot country, to beg him to come to their relief.

Twice before Alvarez had met the rebels. The first time he spoke them well and they ran off all his horses. The second time he armed his Yaquis and Yaqui Mayo rancheros against them and drove them from his domain, inflicting a sanguinary punishment.

Since then he had been itching to engage them in a pitched battle, and when the word reached him he would come. Two hundred and forty Yaquis, all armed with repeating rifles, would follow at his back, and even with his boasted thousands Bernardo Bravo could hardly withstand their valor. So, while the rebels parleyed, demanding a ransom of millions and threatening to destroy the town, the defenders argued and reasoned with them, hoping to kill the time until Alvarez should arrive.

In the open space in front of the house the refugees gathered in an anxious group, waiting for messengers from the front, and as Hooker walked among them he was aware of the malignant glances of Aragon. There were other glances as well, for he had won great favor with the ladies by ditching the powder train, but none from Gracia or her mother.

Bud would not have admitted that he resented this lack of appreciation on the part of Gracia. In fact he hardly knew that he did resent it, but he watched anxiously for any sign of approval from this girl who was to be his partner's bride should he conduct her safely to the border.

From the beginning the Señora Aragon had treated him as a stranger, according to the code of her class, and Hooker had never attempted to in-



ONE PHASE OF MARRIED LIFE

Seeming Unhappiness Most Probably Due to Lack of Something to Talk About.

It is the eternal tete-a-tete of married life that most critics of that blissful condition find fault with. From it spring boredom and dull, sodden silence, assert these cynics. Therefore, a hint for escaping this one depressing quality of marriage should have our best attention.

To illustrate, you will see it frequently on the trolley, when a man and his wife are sitting side by side—it is almost perpetual silence. They have nothing to say to one another. Perhaps the wife will emit a cheerful peep, but the husband will respond with a nod of the head or a hesitating yes or no. It is most always that way. No common interest observed. In fact, it looks as if they are mad at one another, as if they were bored. A young man or woman looking on the couple would be apt to say: "O, you married life!"

But they are not mad. Let some charming lady acquaintance come in and sit down by the husband and he is

trude. But if Gracia still remembered that she was an American girl at heart, she forgot to show it to him. To all she was now the proud Spanish lady, thrown with the common people by the stress of circumstances, but far away from them in her thoughts.

The conference between the leaders dragged on and messengers came and went with the news—then, after hours of debate, it broke up suddenly in a row and the emissaries came back on the run. Even at that they narrowly escaped, for the rebels opened fire upon them from the ridges, and before they could get back to cover the dandy, Manuel del Rey, received a bullet hole through the crown of his hat.

A grim smile flickered across Bud's face as he saw the damage it had wrought, for he knew that Amigo was in the hills—and a bullet shot down hill goes high! Some trace of what was in his mind must have come to Del Rey as he halted in the shelter of the house, for he regarded the American sternly as Aragon spoke rapidly in his ear. But if they planned vengeance between them the times were not right, for a rattle of arms came from the lower town and the captain was up and away to marshal his men to the defense.

So far in the siege Del Rey had kept under cover, patrolling the streets and plaza and letting the volunteers fight, but now the war had shifted to his territory and his rurales were running like mad. For, matching treachery against deceit, the rebel leaders had sent men around to slip up near the town and at the first fusillade from the hillside they came charging up the creek.

Then it was that the ever-watchful rurales proved their worth. As the rebels appeared in the open they ran to the outlying houses and, fighting from the flat roofs, checked the advance until the miners could come to their aid.

But in the confusion another party of rebels had rushed down the gulch from the west, and while the fight was going on in the lower town they found lodgment in a big adobe house. And now for the first time there was fighting in earnest—the house-to-house fighting that is seen at its worst in Mexico. While women screamed in the casa grande and the Americans paced to and fro on the hill, the boom of a dynamite bomb marked the beginning of hand-to-hand.

If there was to be a casualty list in this long-looked-for battle of Fortuna, the time was at hand when they could begin counting the dead.

With a fearlessness born of long familiarity with explosives the Sonoran miners advanced valiantly with their hand grenades—baking powder cans filled with dynamite and studded with fulminating caps. Digging fiercely through wall after wall they approached unperceived by the enemy and the first bomb, flung from a roof, filled the adobe with wounded and dead.

A dense pall of yellowish smoke rose high above the town and, as bomb after bomb was exploded and the yells of the miners grew louder with each success, the stunned invaders broke from cover and rushed helter-skelter up the gulch. Then there was a prodigious shouting from the Sonorans and more than one triumphant grenadier swung his can of giant powder by the sling and let it smash against the hill in a terrific detonation.

In the big house all was confusion. Soon the cheers of the defenders heralded a victory and, in spite of all efforts to restrain them, the wives of the miners rushed into the open to gaze upon the triumph of their menfolk.

On the hilltops the ineffective rebel riflemen rose up from behind their stone wall to stare, until suddenly they, too, were set with a panic and ran to and fro like ants. Then, around the curve below the concentrator, a tall man came dashing up on a pure white horse, and behind him, charging as he charged, came the swarthy Yaquis of Alvarez, their new rides gleaming in the sun.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



PEACE POLICY WISE

President Has Strengthened
Monroe Doctrine.

Exhibition of Disinterestedness in the
Present European Crisis Cannot
Fail to Add to Prestige of
the Country.

What will be the effect of the peace policy of the administration on the Monroe doctrine? The question is suggested by Ambassador Bernstorff's statement that Germany will respect the American view of that doctrine during the course of the war.

An idea is current that little can help the Monroe doctrine except additions to our effective force; that propaganda for peace and governmental activities in favor of peace are, to a great extent, a departure from the course that is its sole support.

This is far from the truth. The main strength of the Monroe doctrine is the prestige and influence of the United States. And this is not based wholly on military power. Important commercial and friendly political relations have much to do with it. The exhibition of great disinterestedness, the rendering of special service to the community of nations, will greatly enhance it.

It is reasonable to predict that if the United States succeeds in playing the part of a real friend and mediator to the warring nations, if it happily fails to her lot to be a potent factor in restoring peace to Europe and thus rendering an unmistakable service, the Monroe doctrine will be greatly strengthened.

It may be found, in the long event, that President Wilson and the United States, without the exhibition of force, have given the Monroe doctrine a support that will protect it against aggression, perhaps even the implied challenge to which it is now occasionally subject for many decades. And it is far enough to look ahead.

It is well to remember that there are other forces in this world besides force. Whatever helps the United States in any way helps the Monroe doctrine.

Splendid Record of Congress.

This newspaper does not by any means approve the work of the fifty-third congress entire. We opposed the free-listing of sugar as a mistake and a virtual breach of the platform pledge, just as many other Democrats and Democratic newspapers did. We opposed the repeal of the toll-exemption clause, forced over the heads of Democratic leaders in the house for reasons of state not yet fully divulged. We have criticized other measures and acts upon grounds that seemed to us sound. But the infallible congress never has arrived and probably never will arrive. This one, judged by its performances, has achieved a record very much above the average. In the accomplishment of constructive tasks shirked or mishandled by its predecessors it has rendered distinguished and memorable service. — New Orleans Times-Picayune.

Securing South American Trade.

It is a mistake to shut one's self up within the foolish conceit of speaking only one language. People who know the language of the South American countries are in demand. It is worth dollars nowadays to be able to sell goods in those parts of the world. Another kind of man that is in demand is one who knows where to find the facts as to what European nations sell to Latin-American peoples. German, French and Italian languages have a new commercial value given them because of the European war. Yet the facilities for learning the speech of any well-known commercial people are so near at hand that it is surprising how few really make an effort to put themselves in possession of this new means of self-advancement. — Wall Street Journal.

The Test of Efficiency.

President Wilson's unflinching devotion to public duty, and his wise attitude in the midst of strange and perilous times, have not failed to win admiration and respect. In August a great personal bereavement befell him in the death of Mrs. Wilson, whose worth of character and grace of personality had given her, as mistress of the White House, a rightful place in the regard of the American people. The president has been sustained in his affliction by the compelling force of his public duties at a moment of unprecedented seriousness in the history of modern nations. Like most of his predecessors, Mr. Wilson has not failed to rise high when great emergencies have afforded a test of character, wisdom and moral power. — American Review of Reviews.

None of Our Business.

Let us refrain from becoming excited over Japan's reported seizure of the Marshall Islands. If Japan seizes a thousand islands in the Pacific, barring our own, it would still be none of our business—unless we should be going into the imperial business. Whether Japan confines her efforts in this war as she promised is no more our affair than was Germany's violation of Belgium's neutrality. If Japan breaks her word to the other powers, it will be their misfortune, not ours. — St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

